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REMARKS

Claims 1 through 15 are pending in the application.

Claim 1 has been amended to reflect that the outer layer A advantageously has a surface smoothness, $R_a \leq 21$ nm. Support for this amendment can be found in the Application-as-filed, for example on Page 17, Table 1, line 17.

Claim 1 has also been amended to reflect that the outer layer A beneficially comprises no external particles and the gloss (20°) of the uncoated surface layer A is greater than 190. Support for this amendment can be found in the Application-as-filed, for example in Claims 4 and 10 as originally filed.

Accordingly, Claims 4 and 10 have been canceled, as their subject matter has been incorporated into Claim 1.

Claim 12 has been amended to address antecedent basis issues. Support for this amendment can be found in the Application-as-filed, for example on Page 15, lines 9 through 17.

Reexamination and reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and formal notification of the allowability of the pending claims are earnestly solicited in light of the remarks which follow.

Amendments to Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to emphasize advantageous films that are particularly suitable for application of subsequent SiO_x ceramic coatings. Such SiO_x coatings have been found to provide improved and more sophisticated barrier properties in comparison to conventional barrier coatings. Films having the recited roughness, gloss and absence of particles within the

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outer A layer have been found to provide a highly advantageous balance of barrier properties and interlaminar adhesion within the resulting SiO_x coated films.

Section 112 Rejection

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, due to the phrase "the film coated on the layer A by the CVD or PECVD process." Claim 12 has been amended to provide sufficient antecedent basis and to further clarify that films in accordance with the invention may advantageously include a coating formed by a CVD or PECVD process disposed on layer A. As noted above, support for this amendment can be found in the Application-as-filed, for example on Page 15, lines 9 through 17.

Applicants accordingly respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Submission of Terminal Disclaimer

Claims 1 through 15 remain provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting in light of co-pending United States Application Nos. 10/683,852 and 10/683,935. A terminal disclaimer to Application Nos. 10/683,852 and 10/683,935 was submitted within Applicants' Amendment of November 3, 2004 ("the foregoing Amendment"). The Office Action indicates that the Terminal Disclaimer Fee Sheet was missing, and therefore the terminal disclaimer was not entered.

Applicants respectfully submit that a Fee Sheet charging the terminal disclaimer fee to Deposit Account 50-2193 was in fact submitted along with the foregoing Amendment. Unfortunately, the Fee Sheet appears to have been mislabeled within PAIR. The Examiner's attention is kindly directed to the PAIR system, Image File Wrapper Section; Mail Room Date: 11/03/04; Document Description : Terminal Disclaimer Filed; at Page 2, bottom right hand column.

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Applicants further respectfully submit that the foregoing Amendment expressly notes that the enclosed terminal disclaimer was authorized to be charged to Deposit Account 50-2193, and further that "any" additional fees were authorized to be charged to the foregoing deposit account. The Fee Transmittal Form of October 10, 2003 accompanying the initial filing of the above-referenced application likewise notes that "[t]he Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fee(s) during the pendency of this application" to the foregoing deposit account.

Accordingly, Applicants' Representative respectfully submits that Applicants have fully authorized the payment of the terminal disclaimer fee. Applicants further respectfully submit that the outstanding rejection has been obviated upon entry of the terminal disclaimer submitted within the foregoing amendment.

Applicants respectfully submit that they are nevertheless prepared to submit a replacement Terminal Disclaimer and accompanying Fee Sheet, should it prove difficult to enter the earlier filed Terminal Disclaimer fee for any reason or should the Examiner otherwise consider a replacement Terminal Disclaimer and associated Fee Sheet to be the most expeditious means by which to advance prosecution.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that Applicants have made a significant and important contribution to the art, which is neither disclosed nor suggested in the art. It is believed that all of pending Claims 1 through 15 are now in condition for immediate allowance. It is requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned if any questions remain to expedite examination of this application.

It is not believed that fees are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional fees are necessary

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to allow consideration of this paper, the fees are likewise hereby authorized to be charged to
Deposit Account No. 50-2193.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office at facsimile number (703) 872-9306 on April 7, 2005.

Claire Wygand

Claire Wygand